

# Council Connection

Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

empowerment • opportunity • inclusion

November 2014

## In This Issue

Provide Input  
Transitioning Youth Conference  
Maryland EXCELS  
Did You Know?  
Free Webinars for Families  
Free Films  
National Disability Policy Report  
MD DD Council is hiring  
Contact Us  
Funding in 2015  
New Online Training  
Supporting Families  
Funding Opportunities  
Sibling Conference  
MD DD Council staff changes

## Provide Input! MD's "community setting" Transition Plan



### Provide Input!

There's still time to provide input as DHMH develops MD's "community setting" Transition Plan. Visit the [DHMH website](#) for more information.

## Paving the Way: Maryland Transitioning Youth Conference

**Save-the-Date**  
**November 15, 2014**  
**BWI Marriott in Baltimore**

Open to youth, families & professionals who work with transitioning youth with disabilities.

To learn more and register: [click](#)

## Funding in 2015

### Enhancing Advocacy & Public Policy Work Project People on the Go of Maryland

Over the past year, People on the Go of Maryland spread awareness about disabilities to elementary school students, provided information and resources to facilitators of local self-advocacy groups, worked with transitioning youth coordinators to establish more youth involvement in advocacy, educated legislators about issues important to people with developmental disabilities, served on committees and work groups on a range of issues, and hosted a one-day Statewide Self-Advocacy Conference with over 100 attendees.

In 2015, POG will continue to grow membership and awareness around the state, serve as a key resource for advocates with developmental disabilities, maintain a voice in policy decisions, train advocates, and build awareness around issues that affect people with developmental disabilities. [Read More](#)



### Advocacy By the Bay

**Tilson & Diaz Solutions, Inc.**

The goal of this grant is to increase self-advocacy skills, understanding of community resources, and engagement in the transition planning process by students with developmental disabilities. The focus will be on middle and high school students in Wicomico and Worcester Counties and elementary, middle and high school students in Somerset County, as well as their families.

Students and school personnel will be trained using the *I'm Determined* curriculum which promotes self-directed individualized education programs and self-determination. Students and their families will also receive training and information about post-secondary options, including employment and post-secondary education. [Read More](#)

### Maryland Project SEARCH

#### Project SEARCH

Project SEARCH is a one year school-to-work program that takes place entirely at the workplace. Students attend the program for a full school year in a host business/hospital and receive a combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and hands-on training through worksite rotations. The program is collaboration between a school system, business, vocational rehabilitation, providers and families.

Project SEARCH has over 200 national and international sites including 8 in Maryland. The 8 Maryland sites include: the Arc Baltimore (3), SEEC (3), the Arc Central Chesapeake (2), and the Arc Howard County.

With Council funding, training and technical assistance will be provided to the

[here](#)

## Quality Matters!



Maryland EXCELS is a program that awards ratings to child care programs, prekindergarten programs and before-and-after school programs that meet increasingly higher standards of quality in key areas.

Search for Maryland EXCELS rated programs online or download the App for your mobile device!

Learn more about how to find high quality child care [here](#).

## Did You Know?

There is a free service in MD to help you find child care for your child with a disability.

LOCATE: Child Care offers enhanced services to families of children with disabilities.

## Free Webinars for Families!



### Offered by The Parents' Place of Maryland

Is it difficult for you to get out to a workshop? Do you wish you could listen to a webinar when it's convenient for you? Well, now you can!

Parents of children receiving special education services often ask, "How will I know my child is learning and making progress?" This webinar will help you learn how to gather information from a variety of sources and how to use

sites in Maryland. Meetings and trainings will be held with the goal of increasing communication between Project SEARCH sites, sharing experiences and learning best practices. [Read More](#)

**Read about other Council grants active in 2015.**

## New Online Training Available Soon!

Maryland Family Network has released *Working with Children with Developmental Disabilities*, a training about supporting children with developmental disabilities in child care.

With funding from the DD Council, this online learning opportunity was developed to give child care providers knowledge about how to offer high quality service to children of all abilities.

The training includes an overview of working with children with developmental disabilities and provides strategies on many ways child care providers can meet the unique needs of every child. Ultimately, this training and others like it, will improve the quality of child care programs, because the quality of any program is tied to the program's ability to support all children.



By improving child care providers understanding of and approaches to working with children with developmental disabilities and their families, more children will have access to high quality, inclusive programs where children with and without developmental disabilities learn and play together.

The training is offered in English and Spanish and child care providers who successfully complete the training will receive continuing education credits.

Available soon. Go to [Maryland Family Network](#) for more information.

## Supporting Families Across the Lifespan

### New Community of Practice Forming

The Developmental Disabilities Administration, in collaboration with the Maryland DD Council and The Arc Maryland, is establishing a *Community of Practice for Supporting Families* that will focus on supporting families and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to be fully engaged in their communities throughout the lifespan. This work is modeled after a national initiative involving six states.

A community of practice (CoP) is a learning environment for intensive exploration into current policy, practices, trends, and barriers across formal and informal systems. It is premised on the belief that the sum of the community knowledge is greater than the sum of individual knowledge.

National consultants contracted by DDA will help guide a methodical approach that engages individuals with I/DD, families, professionals and others across systems to identify strategies and action that will enhance policies and practices, resulting in improved support to families. The focus is not limited to DDA. In general, the CoP will look at things like 1) the knowledge and skills families need, 2) the informal supports & networks they need, and 3) the day-to-day services they need.

Preliminary planning is under way to establish Maryland's Community of Practice team with representation from a variety of sectors and organizations, in addition to people with developmental disabilities and their families. This team will be limited to ensure productivity. However, a variety of strategies will be designed to gain the input and involvement of a broader group of people.

this information to help your child.

To listen, click [here](#).

## Free films!

From Sprout & Comcast

For the month of November Comcast is including 10 films from The Arc & Sprout Film Festival / Sproutfix free On Demand for all Comcast/Xfinity subscribers.

To access these tools and create awareness about people with intellectual and developmental disabilities:

For Online - the films can be viewed [here](#).

For Television - go to On Demand, click into the Specials folder and then click into the folder labeled Disability Awareness and Sprout Film Festival.

## National Council on Disability: National Progress Report Now Available

Read NCD's annual report and recommendations concerning the state of disability policy in the United State.

[National Disability Policy: A Progress Report - October 2014](#)

## The MD DD Council is hiring!

Interested in sibling issues?  
If so, the Special Projects Coordinator for Sibling Support Issues could be the job for you.

Applications are due Nov. 14th.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

## Contact Us

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410-767-3670  
1-800-305-6441

Stay tuned for more information.

A national gathering in 2011 was the impetus for a renewed look at supports to families. A [Report](#) from the event stated it this way: The overall goal of supporting families, with all of their complexity, strengths and unique abilities is so they can best support, nurture, love and facilitate opportunities for the achievement of self-determination, interdependence, productivity, integration, and inclusion in all facets of community life for their family members.

[Read](#) about what's going on around the country and related resources.



**SUPPORTING FAMILIES**  
of individuals with intellectual & developmental disabilities

THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE • FUNDED BY THE ADMINISTRATION ON INTELLECTUAL & DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

## 5 Funding Opportunities from the MD DD Council

Submissions Accepted at any Time

### (1) Education & Training Event Sponsorships (NEW!)

Sponsorships support the participation of people with developmental disabilities and their family members at conferences, workshops and other trainings in Maryland. [Read More](#)

### (2) Conference Participation (Updated)

Conference Participation assists a small number of people with developmental disabilities and family members of people with developmental disabilities with the cost of attending out-of-state conferences. [Read More](#)

### (3) Small Grants (Updated)

Small Grants support initiatives and activities in Maryland that improve the lives of Marylanders with developmental disabilities and their families and increase their inclusion in community life. Small Grants are intended to have an impact that lasts beyond the duration of the grant. [Read More](#)

### (4) Small Grants for Self-Advocacy Groups

Small Grants are funds set aside for people with disabilities and advocacy groups whose members have developmental disabilities to accomplish their goals and activities. [Read More](#)

### (5) Unsolicited Funding Requests

Although most projects and initiatives that the Maryland DD Council invests in are funded through a competitive request for proposals (RFP) process, small grants or contracts, we sometimes have a limited amount of funds to support unsolicited innovative ideas. [Read More](#)

## Sibling Conference

Coming in 2015!

The Maryland DD Council has started working with sibling leaders, The Arc Maryland, By Their Side, The MD State Department of Education and others to plan a Sibling Conference for individuals who have a sibling with disabilities. The conference will be in late 2015. We have a lot of ideas percolating to address the needs and interests of young sibs, teens, adults and parents. Watch for information in this newsletter in 2015!



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## MD DD Council Staff Changes

On October 17th, the Council bid farewell to Angela Castillo-Epps who served as the Council's Director of Communications for eight years. Angela has joined the staff of the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities as their Technical Assistance Specialist. In that position, she will support DD Councils throughout the country.

We wish Angela the best of luck with this new opportunity. See the sidebar for information about our search for a new Director of Communications and help us spread the word!

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